Italian Society of Mineralogy and Petrology

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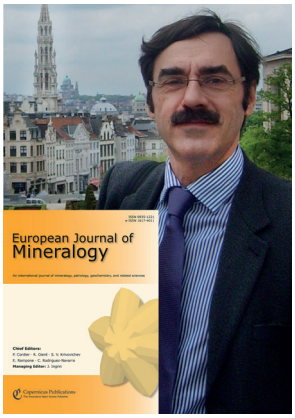
EDITORIAL

Is There a New Performance Indicator for Reviewers on the Rise?



Most of us are experiencing a new trend when submitting a review report to editors of several journals. We are solicited to allow our contribution to be encoded as reviewer in external databases (e.g., Publons, ORCID): name, e-mail, title of review manuscript, name of the journal, and date of review submission. It is called "reviewer recognition". For the moment, one can refuse to contribute to such data collection, but whether this will become automatic or mandatory in the future remains to be seen.

This data collection has the flavor and the color of a new performance indicator. The owners of the databases are well-known providers of scientific performance indicators. The first and foremost beneficiaries of such databases are publishers, who will have access to a wider pool of reviewers and, as with most indicators, publishers will also have quantitative data to ease the administrative (semi-automatic) burden of recruiting reviewers. Data on contributions as reviewers can easily be merged with other indicators, for instance journal impact factors (IFs), in order to create more elaborated indicators measuring the 'visibility' of a scientist as a reviewer (e.g., putting a weight on each review proportional to the IF of the journal). Notwithstanding, and like many other indicators, such a performance indicator provides limited (to no) information on the quality of the reviews performed. We all know that the time and work put in by reviewers varies from paper to paper. A reviewers' commitment to a thorough review is also very variable. Most of us have been surprised when reading the light review provided by a second reviewer. I am probably not very far from the reality if I say that the amount of time spent on a review can vary up to a factor of 5, independent of the quality of both the journal and the paper.

Finally, because data are valuable and a potential source of profit, we should be mindful when agreeing to provide data to build such datasets. By accepting, we are contributing to building a product that is likely to be sold one day to customers (e.g., publishers, institutions). We are all free to provide data about ourselves. However, my plea to you all is that we, as a community, do it consciously and intentionally, and only if we believe that this indeed represents a benefit to our work. Personally, I am not convinced that it is the case, and we should take a joint stand to prevent poor indicators of quality to disrupt our work and careers. Would the low added value of this new indicator, being built in front our eyes, favor the quality of reviews over the quantity, or the opposite? I let you judge for yourselves.

At the *European Journal of Mineralogy* (*EJM*) we have resisted this trend. We hope that we will not be forced to change it in the future due to peer pressure. However, it is up to reviewers to decide what the review indicators will be that will guide our community in the future. If the majority of reviewers follow the trend, in the end we will have no choice. Myself, I have up to now refused to fill out such 'reviewer recognition' databases. I hope I am not alone.

J. Ingrin
Managing Editor

THE TOURMALINE FAMILY

The 3rd International Conference on Tourmaline (TUR2021) was held 9–11 September 2021 in Portoferraio, Elba Island (Italy) (https://www.tur2021.com/). It followed the philosophy of the previous two such conferences (1997 and 2017), which were both held in Nové Město na Moravě in Brno (Czech Republic). The natural beauties and museums of Elba Island were the ideal setting for TUR2021, including a three-day field trip.

TUR2021 represented a challenge to organize during these COVID-19 times, but, with 78 participants (51 in-person and 27 online) from 12 countries, it was a huge success and featured 54 presentations on tourmaline crystallography, mineralology, petrology, geochemistry, isotopic analyses, ore-deposits research, applications, gemology, and art.

Given the success of TUR2021, another enjoyable "family meeting" is in the works. Stay tuned for TUR2025.

Ferdinando Bosi, Sapienza University of Rome
Federico Pezzotta, Natural History Museum of Milan
Giovanni B. Andreozzi, Sapienza University of Rome
Sabrina Nazzareni, University of Perugia